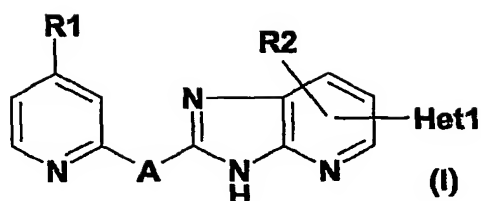


- 33 -

**Patent claims****1. Compounds of formula I**

in which

R1 is 1-4C-alkoxy,

A is 1-4C-alkylene,

R2 is hydrogen, halogen, 1-4C-alkyl or 1-4C-alkoxy,

Het1 is optionally substituted by R3 and/or R4 and is a monocyclic or fused bicyclic 5- to 10-membered unsaturated or partially saturated heteroaryl radical comprising one to three heteroatoms, each of which is selected from a group consisting of nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur, in which

R3 is 1-4C-alkyl, halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, phenyl, mono- or di-1-4C-alkylamino, formyl, 1-4C-alkylcarbonyl, carboxyl or 1-4C-alkoxy,

R4 is 1-4C-alkyl or halogen,

as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

**2. Compounds of formula I according to claim 1**

in which

R1 is methoxy,

A is ethylene,

R2 is hydrogen,

Het1 is optionally substituted by R3 and/or R4 and is a monocyclic or fused bicyclic 5- to 10-membered unsaturated or partially saturated heteroaryl radical comprising one to three heteroatoms, each of which is selected from a group consisting of nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur, in which

R3 is 1-4C-alkyl, halogen, cyano, trifluoromethyl, phenyl, mono- or di-1-4C-alkylamino, formyl, 1-4C-alkylcarbonyl, carboxyl or 1-4C-alkoxy,

R4 is 1-4C-alkyl or halogen,

as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

**3. Compounds of formula I according to claim 1**

in which

1226WOORD01 2004-09 02

- 34 -

R1 is 1-4C-alkoxy, such as e.g. methoxy,  
A is 1-4C-alkylene, such as e.g. ethylene,  
R2 is halogen, 1-4C-alkyl, 1-4C-alkoxy or hydrogen,  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is a thiophenyl radical, in which  
R3 is 1-4C-alkyl or phenyl,  
or  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is a furanyl radical, in which  
R3 is 1-4C-alkyl,  
or  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is a pyridyl radical, in which  
R3 is 1-4C-alkyl,  
or  
or  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is a fused bicyclic 9-membered unsaturated heteroaryl radical, which comprises one or two heteroatoms independently selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur, and which contains a benzene ring, such as e.g. benzimidazolyl, indolyl, benzothiophenyl or benzofuranyl, in which  
R3 is 1-4C-alkyl,  
as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

4. Compounds of formula I according to claim 1  
in which

R1 is methoxy,  
A is ethylene,  
R2 is hydrogen,  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is a thiophenyl radical, in which  
R3 is 1-4C-alkyl or phenyl,  
or  
Het1 is a furanyl radical,  
or  
Het1 is a pyridyl radical,  
or  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is a benzimidazolyl, indolyl, benzothiophenyl or benzofuranyl radical, in which  
R3 is 1-4C-alkyl,  
as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

5. Compounds of formula I according to claim 1  
in which

- 35 -

R1 is methoxy,  
A is ethylene,  
R2 is hydrogen,  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is thiophen-2-yl or thiophen-3-yl, in which  
R3 is methyl or phenyl,  
or  
Het1 is furan-2-yl or furan-3-yl,  
or  
Het1 is pyridin-2-yl, pyridin-3-yl or pyridine-4-yl,  
or  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3, and is benzimidazolyl such as e.g. benzimidazol-2-yl, in which  
R3 is methyl,  
or  
Het1 is indolyl, benzothiophenyl or benzofuranyl, such as e.g. indol-5-yl, benzofuran-2-yl, benzofuran-3-yl, benzothiophen-2-yl or benzothiophen-3-yl,  
as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

6. Compounds of any of the preceding claims under the proviso that 2-[2-(4-methoxypyridin-2-yl)ethyl]-6-(pyridin-3-yl)-3H-imidazo-[4,5-b]pyridine is thereof disclaimed,  
as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

7. Compounds of any of the claims 1 to 5  
under the first proviso that hereby  
Het1 is not pyridyl, and  
under the second proviso that hereby  
Het1 is not pyridyl substituted by R5 wherein  
R5 is halogen, 1-4C-alkyl or 1-4C-alkoxy,  
as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

8. Compounds of formula I according to claim 1, in which  
R1 is methoxy,  
A is ethylene,  
R2 is hydrogen,  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3 and/or R4 and is a thiophenyl radical, in which  
R3 is methyl, chlorine, cyano or phenyl, and  
R4 is methyl,  
or  
Het1 is optionally substituted by R3 and is a furanyl radical, in which

- 36 -

R3 is methyl,

or

Het1 is an indolyl radical,

as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

9. Compounds of formula I according to claim 1, in which

R1 is 1-4C-alkoxy,

A is 1-4C-alkylene,

R2 is hydrogen, halogen, 1-4C-alkyl or 1-4C-alkoxy,

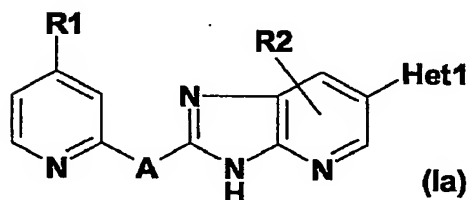
Het1 is pyridyl, or pyridyl substituted by R3, in which

R3 is halogen, 1-4C-alkyl or 1-4C-alkoxy,

under the proviso that 2-[2-(4-methoxypyridin-2-yl)ethyl]-6-(pyridin-3-yl)-3H-imidazo-[4,5-b]pyridine is thereof disclaimed,

as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

10. Compounds of claim 1, wherein said compounds have the formula Ia



in which

R1 is methoxy,

A is ethylene,

R2 is hydrogen,

Het1 is pyridin-4-yl, pyridin-2-yl, 3-fluoro-pyridin-4-yl, 3-chloro-pyridin-4-yl, 6-fluoro-pyridin-3-yl, 6-chloro-pyridin-3-yl, 2-fluoro-pyridin-3-yl, 2-chloro-pyridin-3-yl, 4-methyl-pyridin-2-yl, 5-methyl-pyridin-2-yl, 6-methyl-pyridin-2-yl, 5-methyl-pyridin-3-yl, 2-methyl-pyridin-4-yl, 3-methyl-pyridin-4-yl, 6-methoxy-pyridin-2-yl, 2-methoxy-pyridin-3-yl, 4-methoxy-pyridin-3-yl, 5-methoxy-pyridin-3-yl or 6-methoxy-pyridin-3-yl,

as well as the salts, N-oxides and the salts of the N-oxides of these compounds.

11. Compounds of formula I according to claim 1 for the treatment of diseases.

12. Pharmaceutical compositions containing one or more compounds of formula I according to claim 1 together with the usual pharmaceutical auxiliaries and/or excipients.

- 37 -

- 13.** Use of compounds of formula I according to claim 1 for the production of pharmaceutical compositions for the treatment of acute inflammatory diseases.
- 14.** Use of compounds of formula I according to claim 1 for the production of pharmaceutical compositions for the treatment of chronic inflammatory diseases of peripheral organs and the CNS.
- 15.** A method for treating acute inflammatory diseases in a patient comprising administering to said patient a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of formula I according to claim 1.
- 16.** A method for treating chronic inflammatory diseases of peripheral organs and the CNS in a patient comprising administering to said patient a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of formula I according to claim 1.